



May 21, 2010

Dear neighbor:

In anticipation of your neighborhood being incorporated into the City of Carmel on July 27th of this year, I want to welcome you. For updates, click on the *Southwest Clay Incorporation Information* link on the city's website at www.carmel.in.gov. Southwest Clay Township is one of more than 40 areas that have been brought into the City of Carmel during the past several years. Our experience has shown that these neighborhoods, and our city as a whole, have benefited from the better connections, municipal services, improved infrastructure and efficiencies of scale. Becoming part of the City of Carmel offers numerous benefits to citizens of Southwest Clay Township. First and foremost, you will now have a voice in City Hall as you will be able to vote in city elections. Secondly, you have access to Carmel's city services.

Improvements to the existing traffic infrastructure will be one of the most visible benefits to Southwest Clay Township. In the agreement with the residents of Southwest Clay Township, Carmel has committed to upgrade most major intersections by installing roundabouts. Storm water management is also improved any time a road construction project is undertaken. These road projects will help alleviate many of the traffic congestion burdens that have resulted from Southwest Clay Township's growth beyond the existing infrastructure's capacity.

Carmel Utilities will continue to administer the services of Southwest Clay residents' water needs. Three years ago, the city went through several legal battles to acquire the water customers in Southwest Clay Township from the Indianapolis Water Company (IWC) in order to better serve the whole city in the future. Since then, IWC has had several rate increases, whereas Carmel's water rate has only experienced one rate increase in the past 15 years. As a result, IWC customers pay nearly two times that of Carmel Water customers. Currently, an additional rate increase is being requested by Indianapolis Water, which will make the rate spread between the two utilities even greater.

Carmel has **strong fiscal management**. The City maintains a 10-year fiscal plan in order to effectively manage its finances. Tax payments by Carmel residents are among the lowest in the state and its debt ratings are excellent as well. Its Standard & Poor's general obligation debt rating is AA+.

Carmel Police Protection will be part of your newly provided services. The Carmel Police Department will continue to work with the Hamilton County Sheriff to provide a smooth transition of services. In 2008, the Carmel Police Department received its fourth accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) for practicing excellent law enforcement standards. It is one of only nine law enforcement agencies in the state of Indiana to hold this accreditation. By gaining accreditation, the Carmel Police Department has proven to operate on a higher level of standards for the field of law enforcement.

The police department also holds a **Citizens Police Academy** program each fall and spring that you are welcome to participate in as a Carmel citizen. The eleven-week program opens channels of communication between the citizens of Carmel and their Police Department. The Academy offers an understanding of the police role in the community by providing participants with an accurate knowledge of the department's many responsibilities and functions.

Snow removal is another service that the city will now provide to Southwest Clay Township. If it snows more than three inches, Carmel plows all city-owned streets. Main and secondary thoroughfares are cleared first, followed by neighborhood streets. Therefore, it is possible that your neighborhood may no longer have to contract with an outside company for snow removal.

Your **property values** will be positively impacted by this change. Becoming a part of the City of Carmel will also continue to ensure that your home or business holds its value as the City's Code Enforcement Officers from our planning and zoning department will now be able to enforce City Codes and Ordinances.

I would also encourage your neighborhood association president to become involved with the **Carmel Neighborhood Association Network** (CNAN). It was formed for the purpose of strengthening our community, as a forum to discuss issues of concern in your neighborhoods and to present informational programs on city ordinances, agencies and development. Carmel City Councilors, municipal department leadership and other knowledgeable speakers join me at these meetings to present information and answer any questions you may have. Presidents of your Homeowners Association should sign up by emailing your contact information to Michelle Krcmery at mkrkmery@carmel.in.gov.

Finally, I answer all my own emails. If you have any questions, please email me at jbrainard@carmel.in.gov or call me directly at 571-2401.

Very truly yours,

Jim Brainard
Mayor